

FARRUKHĪ'S ELEGY ON MAḤMŪD OF GHAZNA*

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I INTRODUCTION

Farrukhī Sīstānī was, with 'Unṣurī and Manūchihri, one of that triad of outstanding lyric poets at the court of the early Ghaznavid sultans after the towering figure of Firdawsī. During the first half of the fifth/eleventh century, the Ghaznavid dominions, and specifically, the capital Ghazna, were the major centre of the Eastern Islamic world for lyrical and panegyric poetry. Thus began a tradition which continued into later Ghaznavid times with poets of the stature of Mas'ūd-i Sa'd-i Salmān, Sanā'ī, 'Uthmān Mukhtārī, Abu 'l-Faraj Rūnī and Sayyid Ḥasan Ghaznawī, one which was only extinguished by the onslaught of the Ghurids, who at the end of the sixth/eleventh century supplanted the last remaining Ghaznavid rulers in their by then truncated dominions of eastern Afghanistan and the Panjab. This continued vigour of later Ghaznavid poetic activity meant that, to a considerable extent, these poets were able to flourish and to develop the lyric and panegyric genres despite a certain cultural isolation of the reduced Ghaznavid empire from the Iranian lands further west, now dominated by the Great Seljuqs and their Atabegs.¹

How Farrukhī, the offspring of a father who had been in the service of the Ṣaffārid Amīr of Sistan, rose to fame and fortune through the patronage of the Muḥtājīd amīr of the upper Oxus principality of Chaghāniyān, Abu 'l-Muẓaffar Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, is well-known to us from the anecdote on him in Niẓāmī 'Arūḍī Samarqandī's *Chahār maqāla*, the prime source for his early life; this author gives here *in extenso* the fine ode which Farrukhī composed at the Amīr's branding-ground, *dāgh-gāh*, where he kept his stud of mares, and which was one of the two poems of his which caught the Amīr's enthusiastic attention.²

He eventually arrived at Ghazna and the court of the great Sultan Maḥmūd, dying, after his career as a court eulogist, in the reign of Maḥmūd's son Mas'ūd in 429/1037–8, whilst probably still in his middle age. The late bibliographical sources have little hard information about the course of Farrukhī's career in the royal entourage,³ and what we know of this period of his life, when he was at the height of his creative

powers, must be gleaned or inferred from the 9,000 or so lines of his verse which have survived; it certainly seems, as Meisami has observed, that Farrukhī was closely involved in the politics and intrigues of his time.⁴ Thus we learn from his poetry that on various occasions he accompanied Maḥmūd on his raids to India, including the celebrated expedition across the subcontinent to Somnāth in the Kathiawar peninsula (in 416/1019),⁵ forays into the Ganges valley as far as Baran (Bulandshahr) and Qannawj, and against the Hindūshāhī Rajah Trilochanpāl in what was later to be known as Rohilkhand (in 410/1019),⁶ and an attack on Thanesar (perhaps that of 405/1014).⁷ At other times, he accompanied the Sultan's brother 'Aḍud al-Dawla Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf b. Sebuktigin to the shores of the Jhelum River.⁸

Farrukhī excelled above all in the eulogistic *qaṣīda*, hence it is not surprising to find such references as these to the exploits of the Sultan and his commanders in India, together with an emphasis on Maḥmūd as hammer of the pagan idol-worshippers there, thus buttressing his reputation as the defender of Sunni orthodoxy.⁹ Quantitatively, Maḥmūd is almost the *mamdūh* of Farrukhī's (out of some twenty-five persons in the *Dīwān* to whom odes are addressed) with the greatest number of poems addressed to him (44 *qaṣīdas* out of a total of 214 in the *Dīwān* as at present preserved), but this figure is just surpassed by the poems addressed to Maḥmūd's son and short-reigned successor on the throne in Ghazna, Muḥammad (46 *qaṣīdas* and a *tarjī'band*). A further indication concerning the members of the ruling family to whom Farrukhī was particularly close is the fact that he addressed almost as many poems to the Amīr Yūsuf b. Sebuktigin as to his brother Maḥmūd and his nephew Muḥammad (39 *qaṣīdas* and a *tarjī'band*).

The question, who were the outstanding patrons of Farrukhī at the Ghaznavid court? has a bearing in our consideration of the exact dating and circumstances of composition of his elegy on Maḥmūd. The mentions within the elegy itself of the dead Sultan's brother (11. 52–6, 68), without any name being specified, can only refer to the Amīr Yūsuf, the sole brother of Maḥmūd's who outlived him (the Amīr Abu 'l-Muẓaffar Naṣr b.

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Sebuktigin, commander-in-chief of the Ghaznavid army in Khurasan, had died in 412/1021–2).¹⁰ The mentions in the elegy of the Sultan's son, the *walī 'ahd* or designated heir to the throne (ll. 67–8), again have no actual name attached to them. Maḥmūd's relations in the course of his reign with the two most prominent of his sons, the eldest one Mas'ūd and Muḥammad, were variable and ambivalent. Mas'ūd had been appointed governor of Herat in 406/1015–16 and designated heir to the throne; but subsequently he incurred his father's suspicion, and Muḥammad supplanted him in Maḥmūd's favour so that in 409/1018 the Sultan asked the 'Abbāsid caliph al-Qādir, his nominal suzerain, to give Muḥammad precedence over his brother Mas'ūd in official correspondence, whilst continuing however to treat the latter as *walī 'ahd*. Then shortly before his death, when his physical constitution and his judgment both seem to have been impaired, Maḥmūd transferred the succession to Muḥammad, who then became the new *walī 'ahd*.¹¹

When Maḥmūd died on 23 Rabī' II 421/30 April 1030, Muḥammad was brought back from Gūzgān in northern Afghanistan, where he had been acting as governor since the death of the last adult Farīghūnid amīr of that principality, and proclaimed ruler in Ghazna, the two dominating figures behind this speedy action (Mas'ūd himself being far away in the recently-conquered provinces of central and western Persia) being the Chief *Hājib* 'Alī Qarīb b. Il Arslan and the Amīr Yūsuf.¹² Given the closeness of Farrukhī to the Prince Muḥammad—he had on occasion accompanied the latter to Gūzgān¹³—it seems a reasonable inference to date Farrukhī's elegy to the days immediately after Maḥmūd's death, when its emotional impact on its hearers would obviously be greatest, and to identify the dead Sultan's son with Muḥammad, whose succession to power was to be facilitated by the Sultan's brother, i.e. the Amīr Yūsuf (l. 68).

A small doubt remains that the mention of the "cherished son", *farzand-i 'azīz* (l. 42), specifically called *walī 'ahd* in ll. 67–8, might conceivably refer to the Prince Mas'ūd. Muḥammad's first sultanate (he was briefly raised to the throne again in 432/1041 by the rebellious troops who murdered Mas'ūd on his retreat from Ghazna to India)¹⁴ lasted for five months only and collapsed at the end of Ramaḍān 421/end of September 1030, when Mas'ūd was proclaimed Sultan by the victorious army of Khurasan and then hailed in Ghazna by the leading military and civilian figures there. Muḥammad's erstwhile supporters, the Amīr Yūsuf included, had gone over to Mas'ūd's side when it had become obvious that Muḥammad would not be able to maintain himself on the throne on Ghazna, although this did not subsequently save them from the new Sultan's wrath against the so-called *Maḥmūdiyyān* or *Pidariyān*, supporters of the old régime and ancient enemies of his at the father's court; thus the Amīr Yūsuf

was arrested in 422/1031 and died in the fortress of Durūna in the following year.¹⁵

If one posits a time lapse of some four or five months between Maḥmūd's death and Farrukhī's composition of his elegy, then the son mentioned in the poem might conceivably be Mas'ūd, who had by then received the support of his uncle the Amīr Yūsuf. This would obviously entail a change of allegiance by Farrukhī himself, he having sensed, like so many others in Ghazna at the time, which way the wind was blowing.¹⁶ That such a change of loyalty did take place is confirmed by a poem addressed to Mas'ūd with the heading (supplied from the ancient manuscript of the *Dīwān* selected by 'Abd al-Rasūlī as the basis for his pioneer edition)¹⁷ "Beseeching urgently (*dar taqāḍā*) the return of Sultan Mas'ūd from Iṣfahān to Ghaznīn after Maḥmūd's demise".¹⁸ Later, Farrukhī addressed *qaṣīdas* to the new Sultan Mas'ūd and to leading ministers of his like the Vizier Aḥmad b. Ḥasan Maymandī (e.g. congratulating the latter on his resumption of the vizierate for Mas'ūd immediately following the Sultan's accession)¹⁹ and the officials Abū Ṭāhir Ṭayyib and Abū Sahl Ḥamdawī/Ḥamdūnī. But the odes addressed to Mas'ūd amount in total to ten only, at least one of these²⁰ being dedicated to Mas'ūd when he was still the official *walī 'ahd* of his father. One suspects that, for the last eight years of his life, Farrukhī enjoyed less of the Sultan's favour, as being in effect one of the *Maḥmūdiyyān*, too closely identified with the preceding régimes; at least quantitatively, Farrukhī's verse seems to have faltered,²¹ and it is Manūchihri whom we associate, above all, with Mas'ūd's sultanate. All in all, it appears improbable that Mas'ūd is the "beloved son" of the elegy; the putative time of composition for the poem accords best with the days immediately after Maḥmūd's death and the elevation to power in Ghazna of the Prince Muḥammad by the Amīr Yūsuf and other leading dignitaries.

II TRANSLATION

In mention of Sultan Maḥmūd's death and in elegising that monarch, he recited:

1. The town of Ghaznīn is not the same as I saw it previously; what has happened that affairs have this year assumed a different complexion?
2. I see the houses full of lamentation and clamour and crying: lamentation and clamour and crying which render the soul distressed.
3. I see the streets full of agitation and all the streets, from end to end, are full of upheaval, seething with troops of cavalry.
4. I see the rows of shops emptied of their people and the doors of the booths all closed, with every door nailed up.

5. I see palaces, deserted by the throngs of courtiers, all in a body gone off to the inner town (*shahrastān*) from the suburbs (*rabad*).
6. I see the great men of state, beating their faces just like women, having rendered their eyes full of tears of blood, of the colour of pomegranate flowers (i.e. bloodshot and red-rimmed).
7. I see the great commanders (*hājibān*), sick at heart and clothed in black, one (commander) with his hat cast down from the head and the other with his head-band removed.
8. I see the great ladies, who have streamed out of the houses into the street, weeping copiously at the gateway of the square and continually lamenting volubly.
9. I see the secretaries of the administration, with their inkstands put aside, with their hands on their brows (lit. heads) and having beaten their heads against the wall (i.e. as a sign of grief).
10. I see the financial officials, returned downcast from their work, with no labour accomplished and not having gone to the accounting office.
11. I see the musicians and entertainers weeping and biting all ten fingers of their hands (i.e. troubled and ill at ease), with their stringed musical instruments on their heads (i.e. unplayed) and having beaten their faces in a distraught manner.
12. I see an army, mortified and reduced to a state of confusion, with their eyes full of tears and (their bodies) made emaciated by sorrow and grief.
13. Are these the same warriors whom I saw formerly? And is this the same town and land which I saw last year?
14. Has the king not returned this year from the war against the infidels (*ghazā*)? Has the enemy set his face towards this town and these lands?
15. Why has every household lost a dear one this year (i.e. the Sultan), so that the day of all the people (*rūz-i hama*) has become like a dark night from sorrow and grief (or: so that the whole day (*rūz hama*) has become like a dark night with sorrow and grief).
16. Is it perhaps the case that the king lamented in the year before last? Nay, I did not see at that time the like of this affliction!
17. Are you not going to reveal what has happened? Speak, if you are able! I am not a stranger (i.e. you can confide in me); do not keep this event back from me!
18. What is all this hustle, clamour, tumult and uproar about? What does all this agitation, this burden of grief and this excess of talk, signify?
19. Would that that night and day which I feared had never happened, and that happiness had never become sorrow!
20. Would that the eye of evil fortune had never fastened upon the Amīr! Alas, I fear that it has indeed come, and the moon has disappeared behind the mist (i.e. the Amīr has died, has disappeared beneath the dust, *zīr-i ghubār*)!
21. He has passed away and left us all in a state of misery and distress; I myself do not know what cure I can employ for this nor what remedy.
22. Alas and alack and well-a-day, that a king like Maḥmūd should be placed as a wretched one beneath the ground just like any mean object!
23. Alas and alack, that the ruby should revert to its mine (i.e. to the earth); for, being placed within the earth, he can derive no sustenance from it.
24. Alas and alack, that without him I can never see the Garden of Victory full of tulips or roses coming into bloom (var.: or roses of spring)!
25. Alas and alack, that all of a sudden I should see the palace of Maḥmūd and that mansion full of decorative paintings and images empty of him!
26. Alas and alack, that the Carmathian heretics should now be rejoicing, for they will now find security from being showered with stones and the gallows!
27. Alas and alack, that the Byzantine Emperor should now be free of the burdensome necessity of having to erect towers and walls!
28. Alas and alack, that the Brahmans of the whole of India should now be able to (re)construct a place for their idols afresh in the spring!
29. Our Amīr lies asleep (i.e. dead) within the earth, whilst we remain (alive) on its surface! What sort of a day is this, with such darkness as this? O Lord we seek refuge (with You from this)!
30. How can I possibly derive an omen for this situation? Things might well be different! Then I will derive that omen from which my heart obtains ease.
31. The Amīr must have drunk wine yesterday, and that is why he is sleeping today. Perhaps he overslept, because he came to harm from excessive drinking?
32. The reason why they are not beating the tabor and kettledrum is so that he may sleep well and that the burden on his heart may be lessened.
33. O Amīr of all princes and emperor of the world, arise and come forth from your chamber (i.e. from the grave), for you have slept very long!
34. Rise, O Shah, for the world has become full of tumult and disturbance! Put down this disturbance, and spend the night and day in joyfulness!
35. Rise, O Shah, for the army has become massed before Qannawj! Set your face in that direction, and launch fire on the crowns of their heads!
36. Rise, O Shah, for the envoys of the rulers have arrived; they hold abundant gifts which they have brought and largesse for scattering!
37. Rise, O Shah, for the commanders have come with their greetings (or: for an audience)! Permit them to enter in audience, for at this very moment the time for the court session has come round!
38. Rise, O Shah, for the rose has blossomed forth in victory! Drain several goblets of ruby-coloured wine over the fresh earth!
39. Rise, O Shah, for they have all assembled for a

game of polo, those with whom you have (in the past) played at polo on many occasions!

40. Rise, O Shah, for just as in every year, some 2,000 elephants have come for the army review past your palace and your garden!

41. Rise, O Shah, for the splendid uniforms of the army have been sewn and got ready, and have been gathered altogether in a single place!

42. Rise, O Shah, for your cherished son has hurried along in order to see you; vouchsafe to him your attention!

43. Who could possibly arouse you from this sleep? You have slept that sleep such as you will not be awakened by any amount of clamour.

44. If you have slept so deeply, O Shah, that you will never rise again, O lord of the world, arise and entrust [your power] to your son!

45. Excessive sleeping, O Emperor, was never your custom; no-one has ever seen you over-indulging in sleep in this manner!

46. Your custom was [rather] continuous raiding and the business of journeying (i.e. leading military expeditions); you never took any repose even when you were ill.

47. You were engaged in journeyings as long as you were alive, and your body, which was like a [stout] mountain, in this activity of travelling became emaciated from the fatigue of journeying.

48. A journey from which one hopes to return involves little trouble, even though it may be difficult.

49. You have a journey ahead of you this year, O Shah, for which no limit or bourn is visible.

50. You should tarry for a while in your palace so that cherished ones and relatives might see your face (i.e. when you are lying in state).

51. Your departure (i.e. on an expedition) used to be in the autumn of each year, O Shah; what is this haste, that this year you have departed (i.e. died) in the spring? (i.e. in the time of growth and burgeoning, when one does not normally expect things to wither and perish).

52. How can you remain patient, and how long can you remain separated (i.e. by death) from that brother whom you cherished at your side?

53. His body has become like a hair (i.e. emaciated) from affliction and grief for you, with his ruddy (lit. tulip-like) countenance turned pale like the colour of a [golden] *dīnār*.

54. From the abundance of his weeping at the head of your grave, O Shah, the water of his eye has rendered furrowed his countenance (i.e. from the streaming of tears).

55. He has a fire in his heart, from which each day he sends up sparks to the dome of the heavens.

56. It is no wonder that your brother suffers grief over you, O Shah; even your enemy is not free from sorrow over you by night and by day.

57. The bird and the fish are perpetually lamenting you, just like women; all have become companions of ours in regretfulness and grief over you.

58. Day and night, over your coffin, the Palace of Victory weeps bitterly, like a raincloud, out of sorrow over you (i.e. whilst you are laid in state).

59. The [hostile] rulers withdrew into their fortresses out of fear and terror of you; O Shah, what fear and terror drove you to the fortress (i.e. of death)?

60. You used to grow sick at heart (*dil-tang*) even in a garden as extensive as a desert; how could you take up an abode in a narrow dwelling place (*jāyghāh tang*)?

61. Indeed, the world did not appreciate your worth; it therefore has no value in the opinion of the wise.

62. For the world, splendour and standing and value were all inherent in you; since you departed from the world, these three [qualities] suddenly disappeared (or: by the time you departed from the world, these three have never once again appeared).

63. For the poets, the bazaar [of eloquence] (i.e. poetic creativity) became kindled with light through you; you departed, and at once, with your departure, that bazaar became lifeless.

64. O Amīr, through whose presence the homeland derived pride! O Amīr, at whose court no source of shame has ever arisen!

65. All your endeavours were focussed on that which God commanded; you always endured great hardship in obeying God!

66. May He pass over [your sins], and may He never bring forward a misdeed for which you have not sought pardon!

67. O Shah, may your name live for ever through your heir (*walī 'ahd*), you kind-hearted, well-disposed one, exponent of magnanimous deeds!

68. May He (sc. God) gladden the grief-stricken heart of this brother, who had a fire kindled in his heart through your loss, through the agency of your heir!

69. May God make your heart happy in that world (i.e. the Afterlife) by (granting you) Paradise and a heavenly reward, and because of (your) abundant activity!

III COMMENTARY

For his elegy, Farrukhī used the *qaṣīda* form whose antecedents probably lay in the beginnings of New Persian literature, as it is fragmentarily known to us, in the third/ninth century, when it was necessarily strongly influenced by Arabic models.²² The *qaṣīda* in Persian came only to full flower, however, at the court of the Ghaznavids in Eastern Iran and at the courts of the Great Seljuqs further west.²³ As noted above, p. 43, the poets who thronged Maḥmūd of Ghazna's court, under the headship of the *amīr al-shu'arā'* or laureate, 'Unsurī, played an especially significant role

in bringing the Persian ode, even at this early stage in its development, to a high degree of sophistication and flexibility. For although the main use of the *qaṣīda* was obviously for panegyric, in which an idealised figure of the ruler or other patron was presented in a repetitive and ritualistic fashion,²⁴ it could also be used for the *marthiya* or elegy, for indeed, praise of the dead is only an extension of praise of the living. Moreover, there were no earlier established forms in Persian for the *marthiya*—only one previous example of the genre seems to be known in New Persian, one in Manichaean script and dating from the third/ninth century, in which the dead person himself speaks from the grave and laments his having been consigned to darkness and oblivion²⁵—and W. L. Hanaway has pertinently observed that Farrukhī's poem established a pattern and framework for all subsequent elegies in Persian, these being discernible, e.g. in such a poem of our own century as the Communist Persian-Tajik poet Abu 'l-Qāsim Lāhūtī's threnody for Lenin. In this article of his,²⁶ Hanaway has given a succinct account of the structure and stylistic features of the poem, and it is on these lines set forth by him that the following, more extended, remarks are based.

Lines 1–12 describe the universal grief and consternation felt in their capital Ghazna by its people, with all classes involved, from the army commanders, the secretaries in the *dīwāns* and the financial officials, down to musicians and singers, on the occasion of Sultan Maḥmūd's death. The whole life of the town has come to a standstill in the universal access of grief. The poet, having returned from a year's absence from the town (in *Gūzgān*?) and accordingly being puzzled by the general atmosphere of mourning, addresses an imaginary or anonymous companion, demanding of him, as a sincere friend, an explanation, and he imagines an eventuality which might have brought about this tragic situation: the death of the Sultan in *ghazw* against the pagans, and the consequent appearance of enemy hordes before Ghazna itself (11. 14–15, 17–18). The depiction of the upset state of the town is not unreminiscent of such Arabic elegies as the unusually lengthy one (135 lines) by the early 'Abbāsid poet Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuraymī on the ravages wrought in Baghdad by the civil warfare between the two brothers al-Amīn and al-Ma'mūn in 197–8/812–13.²⁷ One might also regard 11. 1–13 as in some measure a *nasīb*, what was in the old Arabic *qaṣīda* an erotic prelude but was transformed in Persian poetic convention into a descriptive passage dealing with nature, etc.,²⁸ in the present poem, a description of the grief-stricken town of Ghazna; if this is accepted, one could take 11. 13–17 as forming part of the transitional passage (in Persian, the *girīz(gāh)*) to what in a panegyric ode is the *madīh* or eulogy but, in an elegy like this, to what becomes the poet's extended lamentation on learning of the Sultan's death.

In lines 20–1, the poet realises that the *chashm-i bad*, the evil eye, must have struck the Sultan, and that he must have passed away (using here the euphemism *raft* for "died", cf. *raftī* in l. 63), for only so cataclysmic an event can have reduced the town to such a universal grief and standstill. He now mourns the fact that death has reduced such a mighty monarch to the earth, equally the fate of the meanest of mankind. The whole environment now seems changed for the worst. With the hyperbole characteristic of the *qaṣīda*, whether here in its elegiac form or in its eulogistic one, he mourns that, without Maḥmūd, he will never again be able to contemplate the Sultan's pleasure-garden, the Bāgh-i Fīrūzī, or wander through his splendidly-decorated royal palace, the Kākh-i Maḥmūdī.²⁹ Maḥmūd's old foes—the Carmathian heretics (sc. the Ismā'īlīs of Multān or even the distant Fāṭimids, whom the Sultan, defender of Sunnism, had dreamed of marching against),³⁰ the Byzantine Emperors (upon whom Maḥmūd's conquests towards the end of his life in western Persia had likewise caused him to contemplate an attack in eastern Anatolia or Upper Mesopotamia)³¹ and the Brahmans of India (against whom the Sultan had been wont to lead an expedition into the Gangetic plain each winter)³²—all these can now breathe freely at the removal of the threat of the mighty Ghaznavid army descending upon them. He even imagines that the Sultan is not dead but only sleeping after a bout of wine-drinking, with the musicians silent for fear of disturbing his repose.

Expressing a forlorn hope, from l. 33 onwards the poet apostrophises the dead ruler and invokes his return to life in order to deal with the disturbance and confusion into which the world has fallen during his slumber. He must return to all the activities which filled his reign previously. He must rejoin the Ghaznavid army of India, assembled before Qannawj in the Ganges-Jumna Dō'āb, against whose Pratihāra ruler, the Rajah Rājyapāl, Maḥmūd led an expedition in 409/1018 (l. 35).³³ He must sit in public session in his various palaces in Ghazna for the reception of envoys from foreign potentates (l. 36).³⁴ He must receive in audience the great men of state and the military leaders (l. 37).³⁵ He must take part in the particularly royal and aristocratic game of polo (l. 39).³⁶ He must review his army, for the élite force of the palace ghulāms in their splendid uniforms are drawn up on parade, as are the 2,000 war elephants which, as we know from Bayhaqī's information on early Ghaznavid court life, used to be assembled for inspection (*'arḍ*) on the plain of Shābahār outside Ghazna (11. 40–1).³⁷ Above all, the Sultan's dear son—the very probable identification of whom with Prince Muḥammad has been discussed in Part I above—is here to present his respects (l. 42).

Yet reality cannot be gainsaid. The Sultan must bow to the inevitable. Although feverish military activity was always his wont (11. 45–7), he must now hand

over power to his son and heir (l. 44) and face the journey to “the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns” (ll. 48–9). Only, grief still breaks through; and at least the Sultan’s family and intimates should be able to see the body lying in state in his palace (l. 50). Meanwhile, much of creation weeps and mourns over him: his brother, as might be expected, is worn to emaciation from grief and weeping (ll. 52–56a). Even his erstwhile enemies feel a sense of loss (l. 56b). The pathetic fallacy is invoked; the whole of nature mourns the Sultan’s passing, even the birds and fishes (l. 57), although, on the other hand, the world is described as unappreciative of Maḥmūd’s true worth and therefore merits to be regarded only with contempt by the truly wise (l. 61). Yet with his departure, the outstanding qualities of mankind have disappeared and the paragon upon whom the poets used to focus their aspirations and their eulogistic efforts, has passed on, leaving the bazaar of their eloquence, their poetic talent, extinguished (ll. 62–3). In the end, the poet becomes reconciled to his feeling of deprivation. He commends the Sultan’s soul to God’s forgiveness at the Last Judgment and hopes for a reward for him in Paradise (ll. 65–6, 69), and commends to God likewise the Sultan’s brother for consolation through the succession of the *walī* ‘ahd, by means of whose great exploits in the future Maḥmūd’s name will be fittingly perpetuated (ll. 67–8).

The stylistic features by means of which Farrukhī, achieves his poetic aim have in part been already touched upon; mention of them is important because, as noted above p. 47, they were frequently adopted by later authors for their own *marthiyas*. The devices in question include that of the poet questioning a companion about the sad circumstances which he sees around him, with frequent use of rhetorical questions (ll. 13–17, 29–31). Such conventions go back to the earliest Arabic *qaṣīdas*, in which the poet is often accompanied by one or two companions, imaginary rather than real, seen in the celebrated opening words of Imru’ ul-Qays’s *Mu‘allaqa*, *qifā nabki* . . . “Stand [O two of us,] and let us weep . . .”,³⁸ and in which the poet often addresses questions to the abandoned traces of the desert encampment where his beloved one stayed, without of course expecting the possibility of an answer (*su‘āl al-dīyār wa ‘stī‘jāmuḥā ‘an al-jawāb*).³⁹

Connected with this is the apostrophising of the dead Sultan himself, depicted as if he were still alive and could be summoned from his temporary slumber to take up the business of subjugating the infidels and harassing hostile rulers (ll. 33–67). But because of the Sultan’s absence in reality, the poet must make excuses

for Maḥmūd: perhaps he has overslept after a convivial night of wine drinking (v. 31).

On the whole, Farrukhī follows in his elegy the general practice of employing a simple, straightforward vocabulary, one largely Persian with only a restricted number of Arabic vocables; the syntax is likewise generally clear and untortuous. Noteworthy, however, within this framework of simple wording, is his use of a restricted and repetitive vocabulary of words expressive of disturbance, crying out, weeping and lamentation, which in the earlier part of the poem, especially, pile on the atmosphere of mourning and despair at the Sultan’s death: *nawḥa*, *bāng*, *khurūsh*, *shūrish*, *jūsh*, *khwāsta-dil*, *giryān*, *ghamm*, *ghammdīn*, *shīftawar*, *sar-gudhāshta*, *sarāsīma*, *ḥasrat*, *nālid*, *āshūb*, *shughl*, *tīmār*, *paḥmān*, *bī-chāra*, *dar-mānda*, *darīghā*, etc.

Very noticeable is the poet’s use of anaphora, the successive repetition of phrases to heighten the atmosphere of a particular part of the elegy. In ll. 2–12 the word *bīnam* “I see” introduces a succession of pictures of the town plunged in melancholy and grief, and of the different classes of its people, universally afflicted. We have rhetorical questions which can only, in these sad circumstances, expect a negative or despairing answer, introduced by *magar* . . . “is it not that?” (l. 14–16). Yearning, a desire for the recovery of lost joy, or the outpouring of grief and woe, are conveyed by *kāshkī* “would that!” (ll. 19–20) and *āh wa dardā* (*wa darīghā* “alas and alack (and well-a-day)!” (ll. 22–8). By the use of the command *khīz shāhā*, *kih* . . . “rise, O Shah, for . . .” (ll. 34–42) the Sultan is summoned to arise from his grave, to return to life and to restore the shattered confidence of his people. The repetition of *safar*, *safarī* “journey, journeying, travel” (ll. 47–9) emphasises the relentless activity and campaignings of the Sultan during life, now being continued by the journey into the unknown after death. The repetition of the drawn-out long *ā* vowel sounds in the phrase *āh wa dardā*, repeated seven times, contributes powerfully to the mood of lamentation in the earlier part of the poem, whereas the cry imploring the dead ruler to arise, *khīz shāhā*, repeated nine times in the middle part of the poem, indicates a rallying in the poet’s hitherto despairing thoughts, a clarion call to action which, if it cannot recall the dead from the grave, at least looks forward to the hopes expressed towards the end of the poem that Maḥmūd’s son and heir will worthily continue his work. Thus we move to the closing *du‘ā*, the prayer for the dedicatee or, in this case, for the subject of the poem,⁴⁰ that God will pardon Maḥmūd’s sins and grant him a place in Paradise.

¹ An isolation emphasised by J. T. P. de Bruijn in his *Of Poetry and Piety: the Interaction of Religion and Literature in the Life and Works of Ḥakīm Sanā‘ī of Ghazna* (Leiden, 1983), p. 34; cf. also, Julie S. Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry* (Princeton, 1987), pp. 86–7, n. 15.

² *Chahār maqāla*, ed. Mīrzā Muḥammad Qazwīnī, GMS, XI/1 (London, 1910), pp. 15–16, *Revised Translation* by E. G. Browne, GMS, XI/2 (London, 1921), pp. 16–18; cf. Bosworth, “The Rulers of Chaghāniyān in Early Islamic Times”, *Iran*, XIX (1981), p. 12.

³ Their information can conveniently be read in Muhammad Dabir-

- Siyāqī's edition of the *Dīwān* (Tehran, 1335 sh./1956), Introduction, *ahwāl-i-shā'ir*, pp. *haft-bist u panj*. It is this edition of the *Dīwān* (which follows on the earlier one, the *editio princeps*, of 'Alī 'Abd al-Rasūlī (Tehran, 1311 sh./1932)) which is cited in this article.
- ⁴ "Ghaznavid Panegyrics: Some Political Implications", *Iran*, XXVIII (1990), p. 34.
- ⁵ *Dīwān*, ode no. 18, pp. 24–6, no. 35, pp. 66–74; cf. Muḥammad Nāẓim, *The Life and Times of Sulṭān Maḥmūd of Ghazna* (Cambridge, 1931), pp. 115–21 and 215–18, giving the text and translation of an extract from the second ode and using it to pinpoint the Sultan's route to Somnāth from Multān.
- ⁶ *Dīwān*, ode no. 34, pp. 60–6; cf. Nāẓim, *op. cit.*, pp. 94–6 and 204–6, giving an extract from this poem, with translation.
- ⁷ *Dīwān*, ode no. 30, pp. 51–3; cf. Nāẓim, *op. cit.*, pp. 103–4.
- ⁸ *Dīwān*, ode no. 141, p. 283.
- ⁹ On the Sultan's fame here, see Bosworth, "Maḥmūd of Ghazna in Contemporary Eyes and in Later Persian Literature", *Iran*, IV (1966), pp. 87–9 = *The Medieval History of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1977), no. XVI. Meisami analyses a *qaṣīda* addressed to Maḥmūd, dating from some point between the Ghaznavid invasion of Khwārazm in 408/1017 and the Somnāth expedition of 416–17/1025–6, which especially vaunts the Sultan's Indian campaigns; see her "Ghaznavid Panegyrics: Some Political Implications", pp. 34–6.
- ¹⁰ Gardīzī, *Kitāb Ṣayn al-akhbār*; ed. Nāẓim (Berlin-Stieglitz, 1928), p. 79 = ed. 'Abd al-Hayy Ḥabībī (Tehran, 1347 sh./1968, p. 185; Nāẓim, *Sulṭān Maḥmūd*, p. 132.
- ¹¹ Nāẓim, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–8; R. Gelpke, *Sulṭān Mas'ūd I. von Ḡazna. Die drei ersten Jahre seiner Herrschaft (421/1030–424/1033)* (Munich, 1957), pp. 16–18; Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids. Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern Iran 994: 1040* (Edinburgh, 1963), pp. 227–8.
- ¹² Bosworth, *loc. cit.*
- ¹³ *Dīwān*, ode no. 49, p. 107, with mentions in other *qaṣīdas* addressed to Muḥammad of the poet's stays with him in Gūzgān.
- ¹⁴ Bosworth, *The Later Ghaznavids. The Dynasty in Afghanistan and Northern India 1040–1186* (Edinburgh, 1977), pp. 17–25.
- ¹⁵ Abu 'l-Faḍl Bayhaqī, *Ta'rikh-i Mas'ūdī*, ed. Qāsim Ghanī and 'Alī Akbar Fayyād (Tehran, 1324 sh./1945), p. 252; Gelpke, *op. cit.*, 92; Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids, Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern Iran 994: 1040*, 232.
- ¹⁶ Meisami, "Ghaznavid Panegyrics: Some Political Implications", p. 38, believes that the *qaṣīda* written by Farrukhī for the 'Id al-Fiṭr of 421, i.e. only a month or so before the deposition of its dedicatee, Sultan Muḥammad, in Shawwāl of that year/October 1030, already expresses the poet's reservations about Muḥammad's suitability as a ruler.
- ¹⁷ See Dabīr-Siyāqī's Introduction to his edition of the *Dīwān*, pp. *chahār-panj*.
- ¹⁸ *Dīwān*, ode no. 151, pp. 299–301.
- ¹⁹ *Dīwān*, ode no. 75, pp. 156–8.
- ²⁰ *Dīwān*, ode no. 67, pp. 141–3.
- ²¹ The quite high figure of fifteen odes in the *Dīwān* addressed to Maymandī doubtless relates in large part to his first vizierate, that for Maḥmūd, which lasted eleven years, 405–16/1014–25 (see Nāẓim, *Sulṭān Maḥmūd*, pp. 135–6), as opposed to the mere two years during which he served Mas'ūd before his death in 424/1032 (see Bosworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 60–1, and, in general, Nāẓim and Bosworth, *ET* art. "Maymandī, Aḥmad b. Ḥasan").
- ²² See G. Lazard, *Les premiers poètes persans (IX–X^e siècles), fragments rassemblés, édités et traduits* (Tehran-Paris, 1964) vol. I, pp. 11 ff.
- ²³ Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, pp. 40–1 cf. Jan Rypka *et alii*, *History of Iranian Literature* (Dordrecht, 1968), p. 172 ff.
- ²⁴ As in felicitously emphasised by Meisami in her chapter "The Poetry of Praise", in *op. cit.*, pp. 40–76, drawing upon, *inter alia*, the views expressed by J. W. Clinton.
- ²⁵ See W. B. Henning, "Persian Poetical Manuscripts from the Time of Rūdākī", in *A Locust's Leg. Studies in Honour of S. H. Taqizadeh* (London, 1962), pp. 98–104; Henning's interpretation and reading of this exiguous fragment is a veritable tour-de-force of scholarship.
- ²⁶ *EF* art. "Marthiya. 2. In Persian Literature".
- ²⁷ Given in Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Leiden, III, pp. 873–80.
- ²⁸ Cf. Meisami, *op. cit.*, pp. 40–1.
- ²⁹ We have several mentions in the historical texts, above all in Bayhaqī, of the "Garden of Victory" (or perhaps, the "Turquoise Garden"), a resort much favoured by Maḥmūd and the place where he had, in his lifetime, expressed a wish to be buried. In Mas'ūd's reign, it was the venue for convivial drinking sessions and on at least one occasion for the 'ard or review of contingents of the army. See Bayhaqī, *Ta'rikh-i Mas'ūdī*, pp. 13, 252, 256, 409, 533, etc.; Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, p. 140. The late Alessio Bombaci thought that the Garden and its component or adjacent palace, the Kākh-i Firūzi (which may be Farrukhī's Kākh-i Maḥmūdī, although the Sultans had several palaces in the vicinity of Ghazna, such as the one of Afghān-Shāl, where Maḥmūd's father Sebuktigin was buried, see Bayhaqī, p. 256, and a separate Bāgh-i Maḥmūdī is mentioned also as the venue for Mas'ūd's jollifications, see Bayhaqī, pp. 256, 409, 540, and Bosworth, *op. cit.*, p. 136) "certainly" lay in the rising tract of ground lying between the walled town, the *madīna*, and the suburb of Rawḍa, itself named after the tomb of Maḥmūd. See his *Summary Report on the Italian Archaeological Mission in Afghanistan. I. Introduction to the Excavations at Ghazni*, separatim from *EW*, N.S. X/1–2 (March-June 1959), p. 19.
- ³⁰ See Bosworth, "The Imperial Policy of the Early Ghaznavids", *Islamic Studies. Jnal. of the Central Institute of Islamic Research, Karachi*, 1/3 (1962), pp. 59, 65, 67, 73 = *The Medieval History of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia*, no. XI; *idem*, *The Ghaznavids*, pp. 200, 235.
- ³¹ See *idem*, "The Imperial Policy of the Early Ghaznavids", p. 73. Farrukhī's implication that the Byzantine Emperor can now sit back and breathe a sigh of relief is nevertheless pure hyperbole, for Ghaznavid troops never in practice penetrated further west than Hamadhān.
- ³² See Nāẓim, *Sulṭān Maḥmūd*, pp. 86–122; Bosworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 54–7.
- ³³ Nāẓim, *op. cit.*, pp. 108–9.
- ³⁴ As, e.g., for the reception of envoys from the 'Abbāsīd caliphs, see Bosworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 63–5; A.K.S. Lambton, *ET* art. "Marāsim. 3. In Iran".
- ³⁵ As, e.g., on the great Muslim festivals of the two 'īds and the ancient Iranian ones of Nawrūz and Mihragān. See Gītī Falāḥ Rastgār, "Ādāb wa rusūm wa tashrīfāt dar bār-i Ghazna az khilāl-i Ta'rikh-i Bayhaqī", *Yadnāma-yi Abu 'l-Faḍl Bayhaqī, majmū'a-yi sukhawānānīhā-yi Majlis-i Buzurgdāsh-i Abu 'l-Faḍl Bayhaqī... 1349* (Mashhad, 1350 sh./1971), pp. 430 ff, 445 ff.
- ³⁶ A game always regarded moreover as a supremely important component of *furūsiyya*, exercises aimed at giving a training for warfare; see A. Mez. *The Renaissance of Islam*, Eng. tr. S. Khuda Bakhsh (Patna, 1937), p. 406, and H. Massé, *ET* art. "Cawgān". It was played by the Ghaznavid sultans, and Bayhaqī, p. 409, records under 424/ 1033 that Mas'ūd held a convivial session at the Kūshk-i Sipīd near Ghazna and played polo with his amīrs (*nashāt kard wa chawgān bākht*).
- ³⁷ See Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, pp. 116, 122–3, 127–8. The figure of 2,000 is perhaps a round one; contemporary sources (Gardīzī, Bayhaqī, Farrukhī elsewhere than this, 'Uṭbī) give figures which sound more authentic, such as 1,000, 1,300, 1,670 and 1,700 odd.
- ³⁸ Assuming that *qifā* is to be taken as a dual imperative and not as an energetic form. But in any case, J. A. Abu Haidar has suggested that this ostensible dual form is more probably a poetic licence; see his "*Qifā nabki*: the Dual Form in Arabic Poetry in a New Light", *Jnal. of Arabic Literature*, XIX (1988), pp. 40–8.
- ³⁹ Cf. I. Goldziher, *Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie* (Leiden, 1896–9), vol. I, pp. 146–7.
- ⁴⁰ Although generally considered a Persian innovation, Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, p. 48, points out that the *du'ā* was not unknown in earlier Arabic poetry.